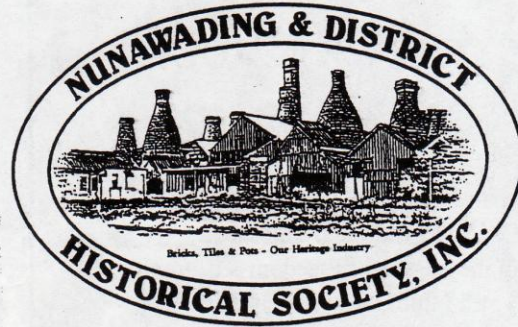


NUNAWADING & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC. NEWSLETTER

President - Barbara Keene 9874 4919
Secretary - Barbara Gardiner 9874 6592
Treasurer - Barbara Rogalski 9874 4668



Series 8. No. 2.

A0012235J

April 1999

All mail to be addressed to P.O. Box 272 Mitcham 3132 - Museum Telephone 9873 4946

From the President

10th November, 1999 - "D DAY" for the inspection of the Schwerkolt Cottage Museum Complex by the Museums Accreditation Programme Panel! A committee consisting of Peter Simmenauer, Anne Jones, Frances Warren, Valda Arrowsmith, Barbara Gardiner and myself has been formed to write the submission. Wish us well in our endeavours which will test our mental capacity and writing skills.

Allom Lovell, Heritage Consultants, have presented their report on the City of Whitehorse Heritage Review - Building Citations to the Steering Committee. The Society's alterations and corrections have been given to the Consultant's researchers and generally speaking, we are reasonably pleased with the report.

We are currently in the process of working towards a formal lease with City of Whitehorse. This will ultimately work to our advantage, we feel, as the responsibilities of both parties will be spelt out rather than on the present somewhat "ad hoc" basis. As well, Museums Australia (Victoria) have strongly suggested that we should have a formal lease.

Following her talk to our February meeting, the Mayor, Cr. Helen Buckingham has made a donation of Whitehorse memorabilia on behalf of the City of Whitehorse. These items, cuff links, mug, etc. - are on display in the Local History Display.

Doris Mattingley, former longtime secretary of our Society, has made several generous donations to the Society's collection - a wooden tea caddy from the early 1800's and portable writing case from the late 1800's, both made of polished wood, a piece of embroidery, a brass spigot and an ebony book-keeper's ruler. These have been part of Doris's collection since the 1970s. It is intended that the tea caddy together

with embroidered teapot covers, currently in storage, will form a new display in the Museum. Do take time on our Open Day to have a look at this display. Doris is not well at the moment and our thoughts are with her.

Planning is in progress for this year's Open Day on April, 18th, which promises to be bigger and better than ever. New exhibits will be Clydesdale horses display, steam driven hay baler, and wandering musicians (all courtesy of the City of Whitehorse). Also of interest will be new displays of patchwork and quilting, and spinning and weaving. Barbara Rogalski will be teaching you how to paint Schwerkolt Cottage on the Cottage lawn. It will be a great day and we look forward to your company on this day and also at the General Meeting on the 10th April..

Barbara Keene

STOP PRESS

Meeting at 1.30 p.m. on Saturday, 10th April at Schwerkolt Cottage Museum Complex.

Guest Speaker - Arthur Tonkin
Subject - Historic Surrey Hills

OPEN DAY ON SUNDAY, APRIL 18TH
NOON TO 5 P.M. PLEASE SPARE AN
HOUR OR TWO TO ASSIST ON THIS
VERY BUSY DAY.

29th May, 1.30 p.m. Local History
Room, Schwerkolt Cottage Museum
Complex - Ann Dixon presents her
collection of antique gown, etc.

LEST WE FORGET

HOME THOUGHTS.

Nunawading! Nunawading!
 Many thousand miles away
 From the scenes, of Freedom's triumph,
 Still I think of you each day;
 And your gardens by the Koonung,
 Red and gold in summer shine,
 How I long once more to see them,
 Nunawading, home of mine!

Nunawading! Nunawading!
 A score of years it seems ago
 Since I left your gums and wattles
 With the boys to fight the foe
 Kings have gone and empires fallen
 Since we reached the battle line - -
 Now the transport's in the offing,
 Nunawading, home of mine!

Nunawading! Nunawading!
 Have your sons not played the game?
 They who fell by Somme and Ancre
 Sure have earned undying fame.
 Now the clash, of arms is over,
 For our homeland we all pine - - -
 Don't you hear the boys returning?
 Nunawading, home, of mine!,

(This poem was printed, in the Box Hill Newspaper dated 16th, December, 1918. I hope the young writer got home safely.) and in the Society's Newsletter of March - April 1979



The War Memorial at Mitcham, c1926 in its original location in Whitehorse Road. It is now located in Halliday Park.

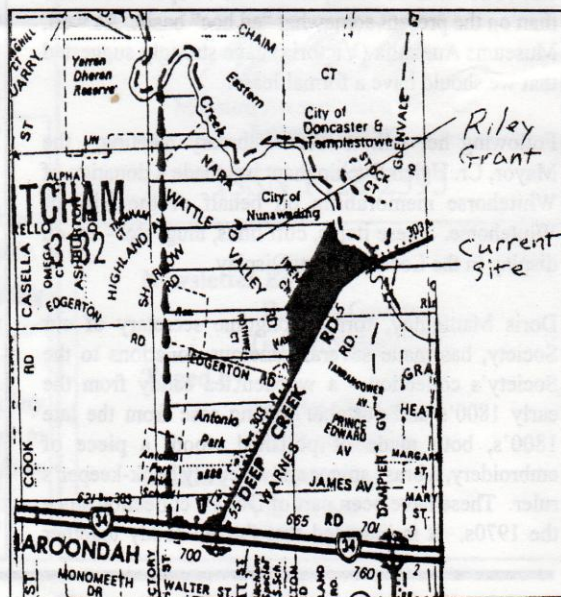
FROM THE CATALOGUERS...

A particularly interesting group of documents were catalogued recently, comprising land transactions concerning the Schwerkolt Cottage site.

These include the original Crown Grant to Patrick Riley, who bought 131 acres as one lot at auction in 1858, part of which was later bought by August Schwerkolt; Search Notes made in 1874, 1893 and 1923, which summarise subdivisions and transfers made under the old General Law; and the Certificate of Title recording the ownership of the five acre site owned by Marie (Mary) Elizabeth Jackschowsky (nee Schwerkolt) and transferred to the City of Nunawading in 1964. August's original property was divided between his wife and son. On the death of Wilhelmina, Mary inherited her 5 acre share (Mary retained hers. Mary Jackschowsky's ownership of the land was threatened by expropriation under the Commonwealth *Aliens Act* after the First World War, as she had married a German citizen while living in America, thus assuming his nationality. The application was not proceeded with, luckily for the residents of Nunawading!

General Law, which applied to land dealings before the passing of the *Transfer of Land Act* in 1862, meant that parties would draw up deeds setting out terms and conditions of sale agreed to, and these deeds would remain with the parties or their solicitors. "Memorials" of the transactions could be lodged with the Registrar General's Department, but it was not compulsory to do so. However, establishment of title to land depended on a chain of ownership being able to be proved, which if not done by an unbroken series of memorials, would require a whole series of deeds. The Torrens system by providing a government guaranteed central record of a land dealing, with a copy for the purchaser, was much less cumbersome and cheaper to administer. Nearly all Victorian land titles have been converted to Torrens title, but General Law continues to apply to land titles which have not been converted.

If you are interested in tracing land transactions under General Law, an article written by Wendy Baker published in the June 1991 issue of *The Genealogist* and located by Anne Jones will be helpful. Thanks to Anne for finding this article.



T.R.B. MORTON OF BLACKBURN

Mrs. Wainwright, one of our members, is a granddaughter of Thomas Richard Burrowes Morton, a leading personality in the Nunawading area for more than thirty years, whose house in Gordon Crescent, near Blackburn railway station, is one of the landmarks of the district. From the recollections and records of Mrs. Wainwright and her cousin Mrs. D. Bullen, supplemented with other documents, the following information about T.R.B. Morton has been obtained.

His father, George Pickering Morton, arrived on the "Earl of Charlemont" from Ireland in 1854. The ship was wrecked at Barwon Heads, without loss of life, on 18th. June 1853. He was appointed to the Victorian civil service in July 1853, and became Clerk of Petty Sessions at Anderson's Creek in January 1858, then Warden's Clerk in 1863. He apparently resigned in 1865.

His son Thomas was born in Collingwood on 12th. March 1854 and was educated at Wesley College, when his father was living in Windsor. He was late starting school, but matriculated in nine subjects, and was noted as being good at figures.

When he was 34 years of age he was secretary of the Freehold Investment and Banking Co, one of the most active land and finance companies of the time. This company bought up more than thirty small farms in the Nunawading area, and he came to live in Blackburn with his wife (nee Louisa Mary Esther Morgan) when there were only four houses in the town. This company is credited in obituaries of T.R.B. Morton with having made Blackburn Lake and built the Morton Hall, which was on the site of the present Blackburn branch of Nunawading Library. His house, which he named "Clonmore", occupied a very pleasant position overlooking the station and was in a part which seemed naturally suitable for a superior residential area.

He was elected to the Nunawading Shire Council in 1888, and his contacts with the financial world of Melbourne were of great value as the Shire negotiated its first loans for street construction. The Freehold Investment and Banking Co. was also active in street construction, because a letter received by the Local Government Department from Nunawading Shire Council gave a list of streets made by them, including part of Blackburn Road and Railway Road, in 1890.

The following year a new company, of which Morton was a director, Blackburn and Tunstall Property Co., took over the Nunawading lands of Freehold Investment and Banking Co. Some of the shareholders were connected with the earlier company, and one or two were Blackburn residents. The value of the lands was nearly 250,000 Pounds, but the new company failed to raise enough money to pay for them, and as the Land Boom burst it was unable to sell land to meet its obligations. The land reverted to Freehold Investment and Banking Co., which was placed in liquidation.

This was a crisis period in Morton's life, and he seems to have tried to sell his Blackburn house, but failed. In the course of liquidating the Freehold Investment and Banking Co., he established an estate agency, with headquarters in Queen's Walk, Melbourne, a building demolished to make the City Square. For

some time he was in partnership with George Coghill, with branch offices in Box Hill and Canterbury. For many years he was steadily selling off the assets of failed Land Boom companies, mostly residential land in the eastern suburbs and country land near Western Port.

His son George joined him in the business and at one time they were conducting weekly sales in Box Hill, Lilydale, Healesville, Launching Place and Emerald, which were the regular market days for all the small farmers of the district.

He retired from the Council in 1897, but was re-elected two years later and remained, a member until his death in 1923. He was President in 1891-2, 1900, 1909-10, 1918-19, and had to contest only one election in more than 30 years.

From the time he came to Blackburn he took a great interest in St. John's Church of England, and had been secretary of the Vestry from the opening of the church in 1890 until 1920. A memorial tablet was unveiled in 1925.

Editor's Note.

Mrs. Wainwright was a member in 1973. Morton Hall was located in Morton Park, Blackburn.

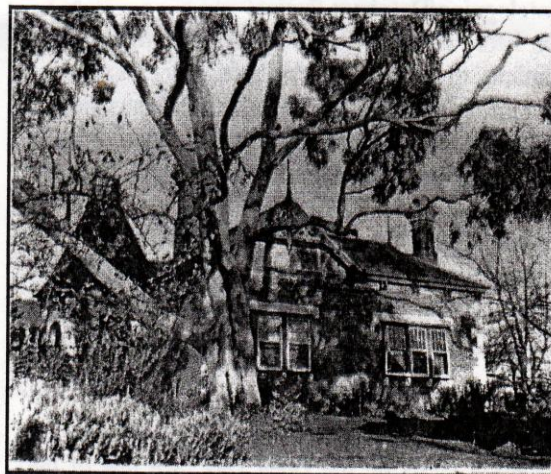
N.H.S. Newsletter - Sept, 74.

T.R.B. Morton's House for Sale

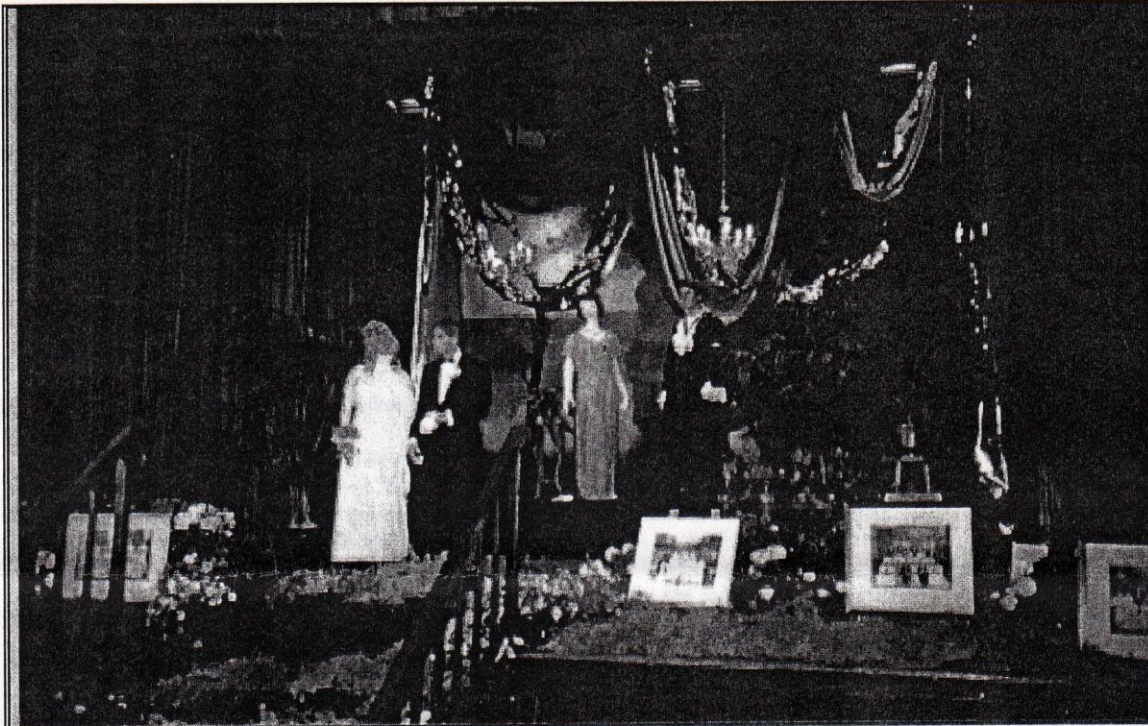
No. 2 Gordon Crescent, which was built by T.R.B. Morton about 1889, when there were only four houses in the area, was advertised for sale by auction on Saturday, 3 August. Its site was chosen as the best in the district because Morton was secretary of the Freehold Investment and Banking Company, one of the most active Land Boom speculators. *Passed in at \$ 69,000.*

Editors note.

We are fortunate in that the Morton House in Gordon Crescent still remains. A small piece of land facing Blackburn Road, has been sub-divided from the main block and a Medical Clinic has been built on it.



The home of T.R.B. Morton in Gordon Crescent Blackburn



Australia Day Stage display at Box Hill Town Hall in January 1999.
 Debutante set arranged jointly with the Box Hill Historical Society. The gowns of the Mayoress and debutante were loaned by Mrs. Marie Dewar who was Mayoress of Box Hill when her daughter was presented in 1966. The photos displayed were of debutante presentations of the former Cities Of Box Hill and Nunawading

Secretary's Notes

April Meeting

Our guest speaker at our meeting on April 10th at 1.30 p.m. in the Local History Room at Schwerkolt Cottage Museum Complex, will be Arthur Tonkin, a long time resident of Surrey Hills, who will share his vast knowledge of this historic suburb.

Cataloguing/Database Project

Our hardworking members of the Wednesday group continue to add to the database and to catalogue documents, photographs and artefacts. In any historical society, this is an ongoing project, and I am sure all members appreciate this important work.

Recently, we have been able to assist some VCE students with their research for the Geography CATs. Our thanks to Valda and Ted Arrowsmith for their help.

T-SHIRTS

It would be great to see more members wearing Society T-shirts on the Open Day. See one of the Barbaras at our April Meeting - Price - Only \$15

February Meeting

Our thanks to Cr. Helen Buckingham for attending our February meeting and reviewing her year as Mayor of the City of Whitehorse and her hopes for the future. We wish her well as she leaves for Barcelona, where she will speak to a world conference on Local Government.

We congratulate our new Mayor, Cr. Peter Allen, on his recent election and trust he will enjoy his year as Mayor of City of Whitehorse.

OPEN DAY - 18th April - noon to 5 p.m.

We will need plenty of helpers on this day so please let myself or Barbara Keene know if you can help. Bring along friends, family, neighbours as this should be an enjoyable day for everyone!

Our thanks to those members who attended the working bee on March 27th - a job well done!

Barbara Gardiner

THE LARGE PADLOCK

For some time a large padlock on the Attendants desk in the Museum has fascinated visitors. Ted Arrowsmith and Norm Foun have been endeavouring to find out its history.

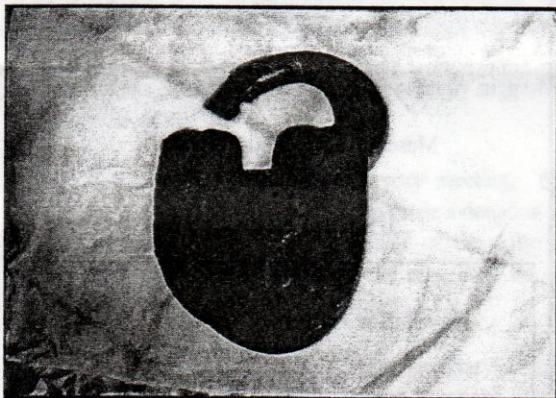
Norm was more persistent and for this we thank him. Through a contact was able to speak to Jim Armstrong, President of the Coburg Historical Society and former Deputy Governor of Pentridge, who had done some extensive research into these devices.

It is his opinion that it is a Horseshoe or "Horse" lock which were made in England in the late 17th, early 18th centuries. It is made from wrought iron and has four brass levers. The size of the lock was meant to signify "Authority" - the larger the lock, the more by authority.

For its size this lock is very weak and could only be used where it could not be tampered with. By simply removing the rivet securing the hasp the lock was rendered useless. These locks were used on gaol gates, and the cells, hatches of ships holds carrying convicts.

The condition of the lock indicates that it was used on a convict ship. The body of the lock is badly corroded and the brass levers have broken in the case, due to the action of the salt air. The rear of the lock has small holes drilled in the case. This was to enable "picks" to be used to open the lock if the key was lost or damaged. Hence the patent on the name plate.

Jim Armstrong also loaned a book to Norm - *The Road to Tyburn - led straight to the Gallows* by Christopher Hibbert (Pantha Books) in which he refers to "large and unbreakable padlock -- opened immense horse padlock with nail". A further book *The Convict Ship 1787-1868* by Charles Bateson on page 184-5 "In addition to being closely confined, the convicts were constantly ironed, and were compelled to carry two heavy irons on their legs and a third around their necks with a large padlock weighing at least one and a half pounds".



FROM THE ARCHIVES (The Genealogist June 1991) The Messiah

The Nunawading Messiah: James Fisher of Nunawading, Victoria, Australia who declared himself to be the Messiah in 1871. His hundred followers were polygamous, he himself had three wives. From *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*. London: Cassell Ltd., 1971.

FROM THE PAST

The Messiah

James Cowley Morgan Fisher - charcoal burner, labourer, member of the Road Board, and dubbed the 'Nunawading Messiah' led a sect which was closely connected with a group called the Christian Israelites. In June 1871 an erstwhile follower, a farmer named Andrew Wilson, took Fisher to Oakleigh Court and accused him of extracting sums of money by false pretences, by claiming to be the Christ with divine powers of healing. Although Fisher had adherents in other parts of the colony, notably in Richmond and Ballarat, the piquancy of the case as far as the press and public were concerned was that Fisher was the Nunawading Messiah.

In an age when spiritualism, free-thinking and fundamentalist religion were elbowing each other aside to attract the attention of a society growing alarmed by or interested in the new scientific theories of the evolutionists, such a story was just the thing for some startling newspaper reports. With its close connection with the Christian Israelites' belief that the Millenium was at hand, Fisher's religion included a dash of Swedenborgianism, a touch of spiritualism and a large dose of Methodism. His detractors also accused him of including much mumbo-jumbo and of proclaiming and practising polygamy, and there were accusations on both sides of 'tampering with the ladies'. Another who now appeared giving evidence against Fisher was John Bignell. Bignell contrived to arrange a public meeting at Barkly Hall in Box Hill where he astonished his audience with disclosures of the weird practices of the Fisherites.

Throughout the case Fisher maintained that he had never represented himself to be the Christ, and he cast reflections on the motives of Bignell and Wilson. Reporters attended one of Fisher's regular preaching meetings in a house in Richmond and remarked on the unexceptional nature of proceedings, commenting that Fisher displayed a considerable command of language, and was listened to throughout with respectful attention." Fisher also had claims to being a practical man, having earned his living variously as a sailor, a gold digger, a carter and labourer in Nunawading since the mid 1850s; and in 1867 he had been elected as a member of the Nunawading Road Board."

Nor are Fisher's flock the least intelligent of the population. They are for the most part shrewd and independent men, sober, honest and industrious, whom it would be hard to impose upon in worldly transactions; and in justice to Fisher it must be said that he sets them a good example in these respects. The wonder is how such men can believe in all Fisher's trash . . .

A year after his first election to the Road Board he was returned unopposed, and in August 1870 he retired from the Board. During that time he attended meetings fairly frequently, moved and seconded the occasional resolution, caused not a single disturbance (which in the Nunawading Road Board was quite remarkable), and not once did he manifest, so far as anyone recorded, his amazing electro-biological powers. In the middle of the Fisher controversy in July 1871 he was appointed as a member of the Local Committee which supervised the running of the Delany's Road School, representing the Christian Israelites. In 1875 he was elected to the Nunawading Shire Council, then in its fourth year: there were four contestants for three vacancies in the centre riding, and Fisher took the third vacancy with only four votes less than the old identities John Keogh and Samuel Collier. In 1877 he was defeated, but only by six votes .

An abridged extract from Andrew Lemon's book **Box Hill**.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday, 10th April 1999, General meeting 1.30pm. Speaker Arthur Tonkin speaking on his memories of Surrey Hills.

Saturday, 17th April 1999, will be held in the Surrey Hills Shopping centre. The Surrey Hills Historical Society are organising this Festival. There will be many interesting attractions.

Saturday, 24th April 1999, Conference, Eastern District Historical Societies, at Healesville Memorial Hall.

Saturday 29th May at 1.30pm A special fund raising day. Ann Dixon, a collector of styles of in clothing worn by people over the past 100 years, will display of her collection.

Saturday, 12th June 1999 at 1.30 p.m. General Meeting with guest speaker will be local resident Robert Morgan talking on the experiences of the showmen involved in the sideshows at the Royal Melbourne show and other shows.

Saturday, 31st July 1999, Workshop on the conservation of artifacts/documents. Local History Room, Schwerkolt Cottage Museum Complex. Hosted by our Society. This is an opportunity to learn how to conserve the many items of our collection.

ANZAC DAY SERVICES

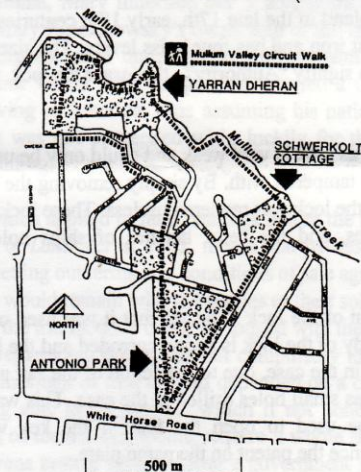
April 18th - Blackburn R.S.L., 66 South Parade, Blackburn. March leaves at 2.15 for Service at the Memorial in Morton Park which is followed by a Service at Clubrooms at 3.00 p.m., after which Afternoon Tea will be served.

April 25th - Mitcham R.S.L. Service begins at 2.15 p.m. at the Memorial in Halliday Park, followed by the March to the Clubrooms at 26 McDowell Street, Mitcham where afternoon tea will be served.

REMEMBER

- ◆ *Street Name Project* - contact Anne Jones 9893 5274 with any details. Searches also available.
- ◆ *Box Hill Cemetery Records and Nunawading Gazette 1964 - 1974* available on microfiche for research.
- ◆ *Nunawading and District Historical Society Local History Collection* - open from 10.30 am to 2.30 pm on Wednesdays. Visitors welcomed. Ring 9873 4946 to make an appointment at other times.

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The N&DHS acknowledge
support from
The City of Whitehorse



Museum Accreditation Program
Registered Museum

ISSN 1328-2395

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